

TEAM POLARIS



and the second of the second o

ike many of its racing counter parts, Polaris has assimilated its new 2004 Pro XR 440 race sled to include rider forward positioning. The new sled features a brand spanking new steering system with an over the engine steering post. According to Polaris test rides, the result is a 33 percent decrease in turning radius. The repositioned console and handlebar position also has reduced driver fatigue

Besides the repositioning, the 440 also received flatter footpads for more stable landings and stand-up riding. In other areas, Polaris added SNO XTM skis to the mix to improve cornering and steering, and the rear suspension has been modified to prevent bottoming by integrating a longer front torque arm. Additionally, the torque arm geometry can be adjusted to accommodate various track conditions. A rail mounted jounce bumper also was added to minimize jarring from hard hits,

RACING



The sled still features Walker Evans's shocks, but this season the rear reservoir is one-inch longer to eliminate shock fade. New adjustable shock rods also were added at all corners.

LibertyTM fans will be happy to hear the liquid-cooled engine is back once again, but this time it makes use of new V-

Force® Reeds and carburetor calibration. The stronger reed is supposed to produce instant throttle response. Paired with that is the improved

Parred with that is the improved Dragon^{1M} ignition system that uses pipe heat management to maximize engine performance along with a little red button to win the holeshot.

The "Dragon Button" is located a thumb length in on the left hand portion of the handlebar. Introduced last season, it's supposed to give Polaris spocrossers a holeshot advantage when dragging off the line at the start of a heat. It works by remapping the timing curve to give the engine a rapid rush of electronic steroids that provoke instant acceleration and an advantage in getting to the first turn. To experience it for yourself, simply use your left thumb to push and hold the red button down as your right thumb slams the throttle trigger against the bar. According to Polaris, this procedure can net you a quick 16-foot jump in the first five seconds versus a non-dragon button-equipped Polaris snocrosser. In the first second, you gain a couple of feet of forward momentum and extend that to nearly 10 feet within the first three seconds of racing acceleration.

All this has led Polaris Racing to declare they've created the "most nimble and driver friendly" Pro XR 440 sled ever.

RACE PROGRAM

Levi LaValle, Dennis Eckstrom, Jusun Tate and Jesse Strege are just some of the names you'll probably hear coming from the Polaris and AMSOIL trailers this season. After being plaqued with injuries last season, look for Team Polaris to put up a fight in the race to the podiums.

LaValle will attempt to continue his seemingly effortless transition from the Semi-Pro to Pro ranks this season after fintishing ainth in Pro Open and eleventh in Pro Stock after racing nine out of ten WSA National events last season. After being called into the Pro Circuit after stop no. 2 of the WSA National Series last year. Launchin' Levis goals this year are to make every Pro finals and be atop the poddim every weekend.

Team AMSOIL counterpart, Dennis Eckstrom, spent part of the 2002-2003 season recovering from a torn ACL in his knee he incurred at a WSA National race in Syracuse. New York, But, proving a true fighter, Dennis Eckstrom returned to visit the podiums three times in four races before taking home the 2003 Winter X Games Snocross silver medal. A couple days later, he earmed a fourth place finish in the X Games Hillcross event proving he's as beaded as healed can be. Look for him to be a contender for the Points Chammionship this season

Amsoil Teammate Justin Tate stepped up to the call of duty during Eckstrom's injury and helped carry Team AMSOIL last season thanks to his three podium appearances at WSA National races. This season, he's looking to do more of the same.

Jesse Strege, Team Polaris' veteran, will split this time this season between WSA Pro Vet and Pro Stock classes. Last year, he finished fifth in points in the Pro Vet circuit and managed to make a Pro Stock final, too. Besides snocross, Strege also is a hardcore cross country racer and is looking to take home an 1-500 victors.

Other Team Polaris racers include Matt Judnick— a newcomer to the Pro class. Carl Schubitzke, Julie Thul— second in points in the WSA National Circuit last season, Mike Schultz and Bobby LePage.





Get in on some televised snocross action yourself when the X Games come to ESPN and ABC networks. Television coverage is as follows (all times are Eastern Time):

Saturday, Jan. 24 on ABC from 1-3 p.m. and on ESPN from 3-5 p.m., and 9-11 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 25on ESPN from 3-6 p.m., and 9-11 p.m

Monday, Jan. 26 on ESPN from 9-11 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 27 on ESPN from 9-11 p.m.